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IV.

ARTHUR RICHMOND AND THE PRESIDENT.

WHILE recognizing the propriety of the REVIEW giving space to personal criticisms upon public characters, I must say that when such essays degenerate into mere vituperative assaults, without justifiable cause, on distinguished public functionaries, I am not only surprised, but somewhat disgusted. Of this sort is the latest letter of Arthur Richmond, where President Cleveland is attacked. It reads as if some one had been employed for this especial service, and found difficulty in getting, I will not say just ground, but recognized ground of attack.

There is no justification. Arthur Richmond has discovered what the press of the United States has failed to find. And he must remember that the press is Republican. Time was in the now half-forgotten past when the press lived exclusively upon circulation, and the noble editor tried, then, to please by putting on record the opinions of his subscribers. That day no longer exists. Advertising is the life blood of the press, and the editor edits to please his patrons. They are the business men of the country, and the business men are republicans. Therefore is it that if President Cleveland were open to the strictures indulged in by Arthur Richmond the abuse would find echo throughout the land. This is not the fact, and, therefore, the invectives of this home-made Junius fall harmless.

Now, while President Cleveland is not a great man, makes no pretensions to statesmanship, he has won the liking of the masses and conquered the respect of his political enemies by a sturdy, almost obstinate, adhesion to what he holds to be good. He has in healthy operation a brain power that gives the best results of what is known as strong common sense, and his motive power is a conscientious desire to do his duty. He comes nearer to what is known under that thread-bare phrase of a man of the people, than any prominent figure since the days of Andrew Jackson. That he will not enact so brilliant a rôle as did Old Hickory we can well know, because Cleveland has no such party at his back. Our President, indeed, may be said, in this respect, to stand alone. The Democracy did not even elect him, and although half the people of the United States respond to-day to this designation, it is not a party in the sense of that name when President Jackson vetoed the bill perpetuating the United States bank, ruined the depositors and drove nullification into silence by threatening to hang Calhoun. The solid South is solid, not because of its Democracy, but because of its negroes. This mass of brutal ignorance was suddenly lifted into citizenship and made the governing element by republican carpet-baggers and bayonets. It was forced into a deadly antagonism by a sense of self-protection. And so it stands to-day, actually in favor of a personal government that would give heavy appropriations under the flag, with about as much Democracy in it as that possessed by the Czar of Russia.

The Ohio Democracy is clamorous for a protection to wool, and Pennsylvania Randallism wants the earth in that direction. The political condition of affairs is enough to make the old leaders in the time of Jackson turn in their graves.

President Cleveland then, so far as a party is concerned, stands alone. He cannot even conciliate the leaders of the so-called Democracy, and gratify his followers by giving them freely what they won in the late Presidential election; and that is the offices. Through a lot of comical statesmanship indulged in by the Hon. George Pendleton, and cunningly carried out by the republicans, the democrats are denied the offices. No man can be turned out except for cause, and no man can be appointed until after a so-called competitive examination that will show, whether the applicant is honest or not, he must be educated. This is hard on our Democracy.

To hold President Cleveland responsible, as Arthur Richmond seeks to do, for

the passage or failure to pass certain measures is simply absurd. The Senate is in the hands of the republicans. The House itself, with the Randall element in it, is not assured to the Democracy, and, so far as reform is concerned, the President is as helpless as if he were yet Sheriff at Buffalo. So all Arthur Richmond's labored crimination and pretended indignation simply makes one tired. An honest, unpretending, able man is President Cleveland. He is giving us a clean administration, and all such attacks are either insincere or silly.

DONN PIATT.